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Fiftieth Anniversary Year

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NEWS & VIEWS

Ah, Scholarship

The modern Church looks down its ecclasiastical nose at transvestites, but according to a study in the *American Journal of Sociology* for May (pardon the delay), it wasn't always such. Transvestites, it seems, were imbued with sainthood in the Middle Ages; that is, if the cross-dressing were done by a female. The male who cross-dressed—well, he lost status, his action being associated with eroticism (allegedly "a desire to have easier access to women for sexual purposes") or with witchcraft. But the female who donned male clothes and adopted the role of the male —well, she was seeking the better part by "trying to imitate the superior sex." Putting it another way, to strive to become "more malelike" was to strive to become a "better person."

Not only was the female cross-dresser revered in the Middle Ages, she appears also to have been at least unofficially encouraged. The *AJS* article by Vern L. Bullough cites some 4th-century counseling of St. Jerome and St. Ambrose to support his point. Ambrose is on record thus: "She who does not believe is a woman and should be designated by the name of her sex, whereas she who believes progresses to perfect manhood, to the measure of the adulthood of Christ. She then dispenses with the name of her sex, the seductiveness of youth, the garrulousuess of old age."

So it is that Bullough, a faculty member of California State College at Northridge, finds in Christian lore numerous stories about saintly women who lived and worked as men. (He locates no male transvestite saints.) Bullough concedes that scholars today may argue that many, if not all of these transvestic saints, were legendary rather than real. But this does not obviate the fact, he declares, that transvestism among women was once usually admired in the church and only rarely punished. (Bullough's purpose is to probe the development of Western attitudes towards transvestism.)

Bullough seems especially taken by bearded female saints, particularly one Uncumber or Wilgefortis. I'll let him tell you of her/him:

"According to tradition Wilgefortis was one of septuplets (some sources say nontuplets) born to a non-Christian ruler of Portugal and his Christian wife. Wilgefortis early decided to devote herself to Christianity and to remain a virgin, but her father had different ideas. When her betrothal to the king of Sicily was announced Wilgefortis protested to her father but he ordered her to marry the king. In desperation Wilgefortis prayed for help, and her prayer was answered by the sudden growth of a long drooping mustache and a silky curling beard. In spite of this her father pushed on with the marriage plans, but when the king of Sicily managed to see his future bride without her veil he refused to proceed with the marriage. In a fit of rage her father then had her crucified. The story has been described as having the 'unenviable distinction of being one of the most obviously false and preposterous of the pseudo-pious romances by which simple Christians have been deceived or regaled' (Butler 1956, 3:151-52). In spite of this, she was much venerated, and as her story traveled across Europe she became known by a variety of names, usually derived from the term *liberata,* the deliverer. Thus in France she became *Livrade,* in Spain *Librada, Debarras* at Beauvais, *Ohnkummer* in Germany, *Ontcommer* in Flanders, and *Uncumber* in England. 'Cumber,' possibly derived from the German *kummer,* meaning trouble, is now an archaic form, although the word 'encumber' and its antonym 'disencumber' are still used. At any rate, in England Uncumber became the patron saint of married women who wanted to rid themselves of their husbands. To encourage the saint to help them they brought offerings of oats, although the reasons for this particular gift are not clear."

One can guess, however.

McLaughlin-Watching

Dr. John McLaughlin, the ex-President's priest, was fielding questions after a luncheon address to the National Press Club in Washington.

What did he think, a reporter asked, of *Commonweal*'s characterization of him as "Nixon's hired collar" and "the greatest living embarrassment to American Jesuits"? [Editorial, June 14]

"Coming from *Commonweal,*" McLaughlin responded, "I think I may have that carved on my gravestone. If I can incur the wrath of the editors of *Commonweal* magazine, then I know that I must be doing something right."

Well, I don't know as McLaughlin has exactly incurred the "wrath" of *Commonweal*'s editors, but he may that of some of the Catholic conservatives to whom he appeals when they catch up with these paragraphs of Marian Christy's profile of the priest in pin-stripes from the July 28 *Boston Globe*:

"Tall, blonde, spectacled McLaughlin, who wears impeccable pin-stripe grey flannel suits from New York's S. K. Friedman, confirmed that he 'dates' Ann Dore, an Environmental Protection Agency worker who gave him a basset hound recently. Ann plays 'hostess' at McLaughlin's frequent cocktail parties. He mixes the drinks. She serves the hors d'oeuvres.

"McLaughlin laughs at the image of swinging party-giver: 'I'm charming,' he says with an exaggerated grin.

Do McLaughlin's female friends, Ann included, accept without rancor his stringent rules about love being a no-no?

"Flamboyant McLaughlin, whose career as Presidential speech writer has been fraught with controversy, sidesteps the too-personal question with more humor. He wheels into a lengthy dissertation about the 'warm' relationship St. Francis DeSales had with Jane DeChantal. 'Apparently,' he says of that particular twosome, 'they were able to maintain the mutual intensity at an appropriate level.'

"Would McLaughlin, who pays taxes on a reported $30,000 annual income, ever consider leaving the priesthood to marry?

" 'The time is approaching,' he says, 'when the imperfect state of celibacy will not be required as an indispensible condition of priesthood. But it probably won't happen before the turn of the century. As an octogenarian, the thought of marriage might intrude on my psyche. But, frankly, I have no marriage plans at this time.' "

Odds and Ends

—Malcolm Muggeridge on the Jesus of his youth: "a most high-minded and altogether estimable man, who, if not actually a paid-up member of the British Labor party, would have been if a Labor party had existed in Palestine in his time."

—The *Catholic Standard and Times* of Philadelphia, modestly playing various persons of the Trinity, disapproved the ordination of 11 women to the Episcopal priesthood: "it seems unlikely to us that God would have withheld from the Blessed Virgin Mary participation in a priestly office which would be open to other women at other times. In brief, If Christ had intended that women be admitted to the priesthood, it seems likely that we would have known before 1974."

JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

North of the Border

Downsview, Ontario

To the Editors: Michael Novak [May 17] has hit the nail on the head with regard to the necessity of understanding other cultures than the American and northern European so prevalent in Humanities courses, even here.

Now we are waiting to see how willing you are to understand these cultures, particularly that to the north of you . . . we Canadians. We know an awful lot about you, America. How much do you know about us?

C. WALLACE

Class & Race Bias

Medford, Mass.

To the Editors: Dr. Marc Lappé is quite right ["Censoring the Hereditarians," Apr. 26]. There is no good reason to accept the Jensen-Shockley-Eysenck claim that they form the vanguard of a full-blown scientific revolution in which realistic hereditarians will displace idealistic environmentalists. Similarly, Dr. Lappé is right to decry the dangerous haste with which these "genetic determinists" have rushed into the realm of social policy, with racist and anti-working class suggestions that range from calling for intensified public school tracking to voluntary sterilization of those with lower than average IQ.

There is great irony, not noted by Dr. Lappé, however, in the hereditarian claim to be revolutionary. Jensen's argument for highly heritable race differences in intelligence rests on the following claims: (1) IQ measures intelligence (and educability); (2) IQ is

(Continued on page 463)

Summer Schedule

In keeping with the usual practice, *Commonweal* is again appearing on alternate weeks during the summer months. Forthcoming issues will be dated September 6 and September 20. From then on we will resume our normal weekly publishing schedule.

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EX-PRESIDENT NIXON

He is gone. He left quietly. By his generally calm manner he gave his departure a dignity that had not characterized his Preisdency or his career —perhaps the most paradoxical and squalid career in our history. The man who rose to power aggravating the public's fear of Communism left office correctly proud that he has softened our relations with Communist Russia and China. The man who ran for office exploiting the public's fear of crime has left it with most of his closest associates indicted or in jail and himself branded as a criminal.

The farewell address to the nation and the goodbye to his staff were highly emotional moments for Richard Milhous Nixon and for the millions of Americans who had watched that same face for a quarter of a century, in times of what he termed "crises," as the man behind the face tried to justify himself to the people.

The face was always a mask, hiding rather than revealing the true nature of the man within. Yet, as his voice shuddered through the declaration that he was not a quitter and that leaving office was opposed to "every instinct" in his body, we may have had a glimmer of the real person; and in his Theodore Rooseveltian word-portrait of the man in the arena stained with sweat and blood, who fails while daring greatly, we at least have a picture of how Richard Nixon views himself.

If there is a true element of tragedy in this humiliating climax of the Nixon public life, it is not in the fact that a man who has risen so high has been forced to become an ordinary citizen. The essence of democracy demands that the President is and always will be just another citizen. And there is nothing tragic—or even sad—in that the former first family will have to get along without Camp David, *The Sequoia*, and Air Force One.

Nixon's human tragedy is that his response to what he remembers as the hardships of his early life has made him hard rather than compassionate, has shriveled his vision of reality rather than expanding it.

For him, to become Someone was to be tough. Life was a fight for a prize. And when the prize was won? It was to be held by any means. Like every

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American he was lured by the dream of success. Unlike every American he realized his dream and was corrupted by it. Thus, while he understood one thing about the American people—their insecurity—he did not understand that with his office and his property he had grasped only a small part of the American dream; nor that the nation had obligations to those non-tough Americans frozen out of the dream: the hungry, the poor, the black and the dissident young. Meanwhile, withdrawing into the unreal world of the power-center, he became so convinced of his own rightness that a common-sense distinction between right and wrong evaporated and any means—from invading a country to paying hush-money to burglars—seemed justified to retain his power.

So, Nixon's farewells touched the heart. But they were not honest. Even now there is no "new" Nixon. He has learned nothing from the debacle which his character and his policies brought on. His accuser, John Dean, who will go to jail, at least admits his guilt; he made his break with the White House because he "just couldn't live this way any longer." Nixon has had no similar confrontation with his better self. He would have us believe that he has been forced out of office because he lost his "political base." As if there had been no Senate Watergate hearings, no 8-0 ruling aganist him by his own Supreme Court, no truly bipartisan decision by the House Judiciary Committee to impeach him on three counts. As if he had not deceived his closest defenders until the last-minute forced publication of the most incriminating tapes.

Now, if President Nixon is gone, "unindicted co-conspirator" Nixon is still with us and the several cases involving him must be pursued until they are resolved in the courts. In short, the history of Watergate must be worked out and publicly settled. Otherwise, too many short-memoried American people will come to believe, as the Russian government has told its people, that Nixon was the victim of hostile Democrats and the press. In this sense, the "nightmare" of Watergate is not over. For it is not just a bad dream from which we can awaken, but a living pattern of activity based in a profound cynicism toward public morality that has poisoned our society and can be cured only by understanding what it is in our culture that allows this type of person to gain national power. For if the personal tragedy of the Nixon era was in a gifted man's flight from reality we must not compound the public tragedy by a flight from what has happened and why.

PRESIDENT GERALD RUDOLPH FORD

However ungracious it may sound, honesty compels the observation that under almost any other set of circumstances the succession of Gerald Rudolph Ford to the Presidency of the United States would be a very dubious blessing. Yet these are times so extraordinary that one willingly moves to the rear of consciousness Mr. Ford's self-conceded limitations, all the appraisals of mediocrity, the long record of partisanship, and takes hope in the ascendency.

Gerald Ford is the first President in history to assume office without popular mandate of the people or expression of the Electoral College. His succession thus contravenes a fundamental tenet of American electoral democracy. But this accident is not without potential advantages. As Mr. Ford himself reminded, it means entering office uncompromised by any campaign, unencumbered by promises, unscarred by partisan battle. Given the experience of '72, this could be benefit indeed, if only because it means that Gerald Ford, President, is beholden to no one expect people and country . . . in debt to nothing except the system that rose him up. If ever a situation was made for necessary new beginnings, this is it. Mr. Ford need only seize the moment and use it imaginatively and non-partisanly.

In this context, his leadership choices will be crucial. The reappointment of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State is to be applauded, but that selection was so obvious—virtually dictated, in fact—as to reflect no aura of genius on Gerald Ford. The testing will come in whom he taps for Vice President and those he calls upon to manage problems so badly neglected under Mr. Nixon: inflation, food costs and supplies, unemployment, energy and the environment, minority rights, health care, and the accumulated burdens of the poor, the aged and the deprived. The Nixon "nightmare" will *not* be over if he settles the Vice Presidency on some ancient saber rattler or someone with an Attica in his past, and if he sticks (as he is in danger of doing) with Nixon-type cosmeticists instead of seeking out for Cabinet and top-level departmental posts persons of new ideas, who combine truly outstanding talent with a sharp sense of compassion for the underprivileged.

What this translates to are philosophical and ideological attitudes radically different from those of the Nixon Administration and Mr. Ford's own narrowly Republican past. Mr. Ford speaks of his being an open and candid Administration, and this is fine. But openness and candidness will count for little if his Administration is not sensitive, responsive and generous in ways he and the past Administration seldom were.

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WASHINGTON REPORT

'SICK TRANSIT . . . .'

Nixon has involuntarily resigned the Presidency. His crew-cut Iagos have departed—for trial or to California. He won't have James St. Clair to kick around anymore.

Nixon was a political jock, to whom only winning mattered. He disrespected the people he was twice elected to govern. "Children," he called them. His mean-spirited outlook added to the burdens of the dispossessed. His legacies to the nation included Haiphong, Cambodia and Kent State—and a record of an attempted coup d'etat that almost succeeded. Blows to a nation that had already suffered three political assassinations, including that of a President, and a scandalous war in Southeast Asia. John Mitchell, in one respect, told it like it was: "Don't watch what we say; watch what we do."

His Administration, spanning more than five years, was a sleazy one. His first Vice President was a grafter. Four members of his Cabinet were indicted. In all, 17 of his principal assistants and their aides were indicted and some of these convicted.

As the Irish in Roxbury used to say: "good riddance to bad rubbish."

His farewell speech was typically deceptive: "If some of my judgments were wrong—and some were wrong—they were made in the best interests of the nation."

This sentence should be included in any English composition courses as a superb example of misleading understatement. To this should be added an earlier sentence in his speech: "In the past few days, however, it has become evident to me that I no longer have a strong enough political base in the Congress to justify continuing that effort (i.e., to resist impeachment)."

Both statements leave room for the Poujardist werewolves to howl that Nixon was "fouled."

This is unfortunate, because an estimated 130-million Americans viewed Nixon's 19-minute farewell speech. The three major television networks, in order to broadcast his speech, canceled three programs, appropriately entitled "The Nature of Evil," "The Last Man," and "The Taste of Ashes." Although Nixon left in disgrace and his Administration's scandals nearly wrecked our Constitutional government, most network commentators immediately treated his speech in a fashion that deceived TV viewers. Hours of babbling inanities, passed-off as commentary, preceded the address broadcast at 9 p.m. Afterward, commentators gave the impression that the speech of resignation was a cross between a college valedictorian speech and a eulogy to a Founding Father.

Americans, at that momentous hour, deserved a cleansing candor. Instead, they were fed deceptive and sloppy sentimentality that will help to delay necessary repairs to the federal government and the political system. There were occasional truth-tellings, but the commentary for the most part left Nixon's departure vulnerable to those who would undertake to convince Americans that he was not involved in wrong-doing and was ousted from office by scheming politicians. The muddled-middle, that TV occupies, performed its obscurantist role that it does so well under the guise of bearing the news and commenting on it.

Nor were Americans clearly informed about the sobering times ahead with a new President, despite his disclaimer that the "long national nightmare is over."

Gerald Ford is an honest Nixon. He is generally portrayed as a genial, over-aged Boy Scout who helped old women across traffic-ladden streets. In fact, his domestic voting record in the House of Representatives is an extremely conservative one—his votes on minimum wage, OEO, consumer and environmental protection legislation being conspicuous examples. His foreign-policy outlook is an aggressive one reflecting the extremes of the 1950s. At best, his voting record on civil rights legislation is one of benign neglect.

More important, the Executive Branch will now be headed for the first time by two men, the President and Vice President, who have not been elected to these positions. In a sense, we have a Directorate. The 25th Amendment, designed to provide a more rational line of succession in case of a vacant Presidency, needs to be altered, in the opinion of some members of Congress, to provide for a special election in the event that neither President nor Vice President has been placed there as a result of a general election. The Amendment, in this situation, is bad procedure, particularly as Big Brotherism continues to make inroads into our public and our private lives.

The inadequacy of the 25th Amendment, albeit an unforeseen circumstance, is of course, a consequence of the manner in which Nixon left the Presidency. Nixon chose an unsatisfactory way out—by deciding to resign, in response to the pleadings of his Republican colleagues, rather than to walk the last mile, the impeachment route. By doing this, he left the situation foggy. He opened the way by which other Presidents could seek to escape accountability. His resignation did not serve the political system well.

Many members of Congress argue otherwise. After all, said Senator Thurmond of South Carolina, Nixon didn't steal, he didn't embezzle money, he didn't murder anyone, so let him go in peace. Grant him immunity from the crimes of subversion of the political system, goes the argument. And in the live-and-let-live political mawkishness of the times, he may receive immunity

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informally if not formally. Some do still live below the salt—and others above the law.

Nor during the immediate period after Nixon's resignation was there any widespread recognition of a need to deflate the Presidency after 40 or more years of inflation, whatever good reasons there may have been at the beginning. President Jefferson, during his first day in Office, ate at his boarding house; Calvin Coolidge walked the streets of downtown Washington; and, only 22 years ago, Harry Truman occasionally strolled the streets of whatever community he found himself in.

This has changed. Presidents now travel with platoons of security agents. Many Americans venerate the occupant of the Presidency. Newspapers and TV are already beginning to encourage this attitude toward the new President. If, as we're told, new occasions teach new duties, then Americans should resolve to govern themselves better, Beware the existing power of the Presidency to tempt an occupant, be it a Johnson or a Nixon, to trespass against us. If we are, as political rhetoric instructs, a resourceful people then we need not place our aspirations upon one man or upon one Office, the Presidency. President Ford—if he is the commonsensical man he is portrayed—can help us to restrain ourselves; as can the 535 members of Congress. So can we, the governed, who vote these people into office. It's a disciplining chore—by comparison, more difficult than Nixon's decision to walk the plank.

During the Presidential crisis, a newly elected Senator said that he was somehow reminded of a passage from Camus wherein a caller visited a friend, who was sick, and then went home and slept on the floor. The Senator said he didn't find many of his colleagues who were willing to do this.

SISYPHUS

BOURGEOIS COMMUNISM IN FRANCE

EMILE J. TALBOT

New directions in French politics

The impressive challenge of François Mitterrand, a Socialist and the common candidate of France's four major leftist parties in the May 19 Presidential elections, underscores the growing importance of the French Communist Party in the political life of France. Commentators will certainly argue that Mitterrand's defeat was in part due to the mistrust of the French electorate for the Communists who backed him and who could have expected a half dozen cabinet posts had he won. But the converse is equally true, and perhaps more important: Mitterrand's 49.3 percent of the popular vote would certainly have been lower by some 10 to 20 percent without Communist support. It is clear, in fact, that a victory of the left in France is now impossible without the cooperation and assistance of the Communist Party. As far as the future of French politics is concerned, it is important that such diverse leftist parties as the Parti Socialiste, the Radicaux de gauche, and the Parti Socialiste Unifié were willing to work with the Communist Party in an attempt to capture the Presidency. This has been possible in large part because the French Communist Party has exhibited over the past decade a new openness and flexibility that has revitalized it from within and gained it respect from without. This is a fact of considerable political consequence, and its significance requires some retrospection.

The French Communist Party, founded in 1920 when a faction of the Socialist Party voted to adhere to the Third International, was for some years content to follow policies decided in Moscow. However, in the thirties, under the leadership of Maurice Thorez, the French Communist Party, without loosening its ties with the Soviets, attempted to become a more truly national party. Internationalism took second place to patriotism, and the Communists sought to convince the French people that the Party was no less French for being inspired by the Soviet example. The Communists' approval of the Germano-Soviet pact of 1939, however, wiped out whatever gains they had made in this area, and the Party was outlawed on September 27, 1939. After the

EMILE J. TALBOT, *an associate professor of French at the University of Illinois (Urbana), recently returned from an extended stay in France.*

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German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, the Communists took an active and decisive part in the Resistance and emerged with sufficient power, influence and respect to permit their inclusion in de Gaulle's provisional government in 1944. Communists were to hold cabinet posts in the French government until 1947 when the polarization of the cold war ended their participation.

In over fifty years of existence, then, the French Communist Party has succeeded in participating in the government for three years only. (It has been considerably more successful on the legislative and municipal level.) The leaders of the Party have long been convinced of the necessity for a broader base. While attempting to remain faithful to their Marxist dogma, their revolutionary ideals, and their Soviet allegiance, they have periodically tried to enlist the support of the Socialists and at times of the lower middle class as well. In 1934 they succeeded in formulating a pact with the Socialists for a common struggle against fascism, and they invited the middle class to join them in an anti-fascist alliance. During the elections of the following year, as a proof of its good will, the Party withdrew some of its candidates in favor of the Socialists and initiated an "extended hand" policy towards Christian workers.

All of this crumbled with the outbreak of World War II and the disarray of the Communists, but in recent years, an attempt has been made to revive the old cooperation. In the 1950s Thorez' successor, Waldeck Rochet, succeeded in forging an election alliance with the Socialists. In the Presidential elections of 1965 the Communists backed Socialist François Mitterrand who polled 44.8 percent of the vote in the run-off with de Gaulle. For the 1967 elections to the National Assembly (which are also held in two stages if no candidate obtains a majority of the votes cast in the first round), Socialists and Communists agreed that the candidate of the left with the fewest votes would throw his support to the other in the second round. This election-time cooperation, which worked with a certain measure of success, was put into effect without an agreement on policies. This lack of an accord on policies was in part the reason why the Socialists and Communists fielded separate candidates, Gaston Deferre and Jacques Duclos, respectively, for the Presidential election of 1969 with the result that both candidates of the left were eliminated in the first round.

The political agreement ardently sought by the Communists was reached under Rochet's successor, the present Secretary-General of the Party, George Marchais. The result was the *Programme commun de gouvernement* [Common Platform] of June 1972 to which both the Communists and Socialists refer with pride. Proposing to put an end "to the injustice and the incoherence of the present regime," the *Programme commun* elaborates on the plans of the left should it attain power. Its importance lies not so much in its substance (which advocates Scandinavian-type solutions to socio-economic problems) as in the fact that two segments of the left which have frequently warred with each other and which have always treated each other with suspicion, were able to overcome their antagonisms for the chance of ruling France together. In accepting this document, the French Communist Party made concessions in the area of foreign policy (universal and *controlled* disarmament, the dismantling of *both* NATO and the Warsaw Pact), and the Socialists agreed to a more extensive nationalization than they had previously been willing to envisage.

This does not mean that the Socialists and Communists now have perfect relations, or even that they agree on all major issues. On the Arab-Israeli conflict, for example, the Communists are openly and strongly pro-Arab, while the Socialists lean—though with less unanimity—towards Israel. Moreover, the Communists have vowed to destroy France's nuclear stockpile should they ever attain power; the Socialists, who are against nuclear armament in principle, are reluctant to make the same pledge. The Socialist Party strongly favors European integration and unity based on the existing European Economic Community. The Communists, however, view the political union of the European Economic Community as a "reactionary alliance dependent on the Atlantic bloc," to quote Georges Marchais. Finally, in January and February of this year, a sharp clash arose between the Communists and Socialists over the Solzhenitsyn affair. The French Communists, while steadfastly proclaiming that Solzhenitsyn could publish his works in a Communist France, have never hidden their dislike for the man and what he stands for. This led to a violent polemic between *Le Nouvel Observateur*, a socialist-oriented weekly magazine with no official ties to the Socialist Party, and various Communist publications, particularly *l'Humanité*. *Le Nouvel Observateur*, which had challenged the Communists' commitment to freedom, was branded as "anti-Soviet, anti-Communist, and a divider of the left" by the French Communist press, and Mitterrand felt obliged to defend *Le Nouvel Observateur* for its contributions to the causes of the

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left and for its independence. The quarrel was overcome through some conciliatory language by both Mitterrand and Marchais, but the issue of the status of intellectual dissent in a socialist France has not been resolved to everyone's satisfaction. The partners maintain, however, that their areas of disagreement are minimal compared to those on which their views converge.

Having welded a necessary alliance with the Socialists, Marchais then turned his attention to those Frenchmen for whom Communism raises the specter of revolution and totalitarianism. The medium chosen was *Le Défi démocratique* [*The Democratic Challenge*], a book authored by Marchais himself. This book, which is meant to summarize the French Communist Party's position on major issues was something of a sensation last fall. Appearing in late August, 1973, it sold very rapidly, reaching a printing of 700,000 copies by early December. The interest in the book corresponds to a new interest in the Communist Party on the part of the French public as well as to a new determination on the part of the Communists to reach out to a broader audience. The book requires the attention, then, of anyone interested in the evolution of European politics.

Let it be said at the outset that there are many weaknesses in this book. Eager to convince, Marchais is quite adept at using an old tactic of debate and polemics which consists in eliminating all related information and perspectives that might tend to weaken his thesis, a device systematically employed by *l'Humanité*. Thus, in answering critics of nationalization who point to the increased inefficiency and bureaucratization that it normally creates, Marchais compares France's nationalized railroad (excellent) to the private (pre-Amtrak) railroad system in the United States (horrible). Conclusion: nationalization leads to better service. The point is well taken—if we limit ourselves to the example chosen. One could, however, select an example that could lead to the opposite conclusion: France's nationalized telephone system versus the United States' privately controlled system. Marchais' recounting of history, particularly his version of the installation of Communist regimes in Russia and Eastern Europe, also suffers from the same kind of myopia. He stresses the foreign capitalist opposition to the regimes, but completely avoids discussing the methods employed by the Communists to get and keep power in those early years.

Marchais' second major weakness is his uncritical admiration for the achievements of the Soviet Union. This is within the tradition of French Communism which in the past has been closely tied to Moscow, even to the extent of approving the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact in 1939 and the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. It is in the light of such positions that French Communists have not unjustly been accused of "double patriotism." It is true that the French Communist Party broke with the Soviets over the invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968, but Marchais has since tried to downgrade the importance of that invasion. Whatever minor disagreements he might have with Soviet policy, Marchais is thoroughly fascinated by what the U.S.S.R. has been able to accomplish economically since 1917. He puts forth impressive facts and figures on improved production and the improved state of the working class that has been the result. Nowhere, though, does he question Stalin's right to sacrifice millions of lives and break millions of spirits in order to accomplish these economic gains. The insensitivity that Marchais has shown in other contexts to the plight of Soviet intellectuals leads one to wonder what he himself would be willing to countenance in order to accomplish the more equitable distribution of wealth he seeks.

If one is willing to put aside the worn-out slogans and be on guard against one-sided facts and figures, one can, however, find in this book a more human and humane Communism, one that is willing to work within basic traditions of the West in order to achieve, not a workers' paradise, but a state of economic and social equity in which no man is exploited by another. For this is meant to be a reassuring book. Marchais' purpose is to convince the French people, particularly the educated middle class, that the French Communist Party constitutes no danger to them, that it is committed to democratic processes, and that its economic policies while admittedly working to the detriment of the superrich, would benefit not only the lower classes, but, by increasing everyone's purchasing power, the middle class as well.

Marchais begins by describing the current economic state of France's working class. Anyone who has lived in France in recent years can appreciate the immense difficulties endured by nearly three million French workers who in 1972 earned less than 1000 francs a month ($215 at the current rate of exchange) in a country where the cost of living is higher than in the United States and where rents and indirect taxes are the highest in Europe. Moreover, this meager remuneration accounts for an average work-week of 44 hours. To these hours must often be added one or two hours per day of commuting since many workers can no longer afford to live near their place of work. For these, the work-related time spent away from home is thus almost that of workers in the nineteenth century.

To remedy this plight somewhat, Marchais proposes an immediate monthly minimum wage of 1100 francs for a 40-hour work-week with guaranteed cost-of-living increases and retirement at age 60 for men and 55 for women, again with increased benefits. (In March, the signatory parties of the *Programme commun* called for a minimum wage of 1200 francs a month as did candidate Mitterrand during the campaign of April and May.) But these are surface reforms. The fundamental reform would consist in the nationalization of large industries

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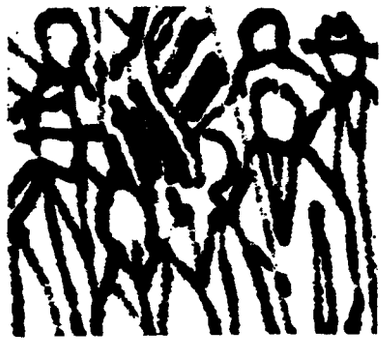
and banks which work for the profit of the few to the expense of the many. For Marchais, nationalization is simply an act of justice, for it is giving to the nation control over its most vital enterprises. (Small and medium stockholders of France be reassured: Marchais' plans include reimbursing you.)

Beyond nationalization, Marchais proposes a participatory democracy in both the political and socio-economic fields. In the political area, Marchais seeks mainly



a more truly proportional representation in the National Assembly to correct the present districting which tends to give more representatives per capita to the upper classes and to some rural areas. This is a matter to which the Communist Party is sensitive, having received only 15 percent of the seats in the National Assembly in 1973 while collecting 21.3 percent of the vote. In the socio-economic spheres, Marchais advocates giving the workers an important voice in the management of their factories. Nationalized industries would be managed by an administrative council consisting of elected representatives of the workers, representatives of the users of the industry's product, and appointed representatives of the government (the latter never constituting a majority of the council). The industry would retain a considerable autonomy, formulate its own policies, programs, budgets and markets, and retain control over its contracts with other firms in both the public and private sector.

Wary of frightening off the middle class whose acquiescence he needs, Marchais is quick to offer guarantees. He does not intend, he affirms, to replace the present exploitation and oppression by a new kind of oppression. It is in capitalist France that decisions come from the top; in a socialist France they will be arrived at in cooperation with those involved. Economic democracy is but the logical and necessary extension of political democracy. Nationalization, he vows, will never touch small industries, shops, or farms. Far from taking away anyone's summer home, Marchais proposes to raise the standard of living to permit more people to have a second home. Nor would the Communists in power attempt to destroy or limit the activities of opposition parties. Freedom of activity would be guaranteed to all political formations. Marchais is here echoing the 17th and 18th Congresses of the French Communist Party (1964 and 1967) which rejected the notion of the single party state. In fact, the challenge which he offers to the right (and the one which furnishes the title to the book) is to see whether it could regain the confidence of the electorate once the Communists had a chance to show what they could do. To those who fear an imitation of the U.S.S.R., Marchais points out that different historical conditions and customs have led to the establishment of different socialist regimes. There can be no "model" for France to follow. Any government in which the Communists would participate would be resolutely French and would respect French traditions. Sensitive to those who have noted, not inaccurately, that the French Communist Party's foreign policy is often quite similar to that of the Soviet Union, Marchais reiterates his commitment to the national interest and proclaims his "intransigent patriotism."

Finally, there remains the question of religion on which the record of intolerance of Communist regimes is well-known. Marchais notes, however, that the attitudes of Christians towards Communists have evolved, that Christians are more than ever committed to social justice. Christians and Communists, he feels, could and should work together in this area of mutual concern. While Marchais does not foresee any philosophical convergence between Christians and Marxists, he does pledge total freedom for religious belief, practice and education. The Communist Party's position on this important issue is not entirely clear, however. Just a few years ago, Marchais had declared that the separation of Church and State would exclude members of the clergy from governmental jobs, including education. The Communists have since retreated from this position and have assured that all Christians could exercise government functions provided they did not do so as representatives of their Church. This remains an area, however, where clearer and firmer assurances are needed.

Marchais is also very eager to explain that Communists are not solely concerned with political and socio-economic issues. Man does not live by bread alone, he wryly observes, leaving out the second half of that abused quote. He stresses that one's work should be personally rewarding and should correspond to one's tastes and aptitudes. Access to recreation, travel, knowledge and culture would be guaranteed to everyone. Marchais wants more parks for the cities to make them more human. He does not favor standardization nor uniformity: this Communist party is not to be colored gray.

But where is the Revolutionary Party? Judging from this book, it no longer exists, for what we are presented with is a program of reform that is hardly distinguishable from that of many non-Communist socialist parties, one with which many European social democrats and American liberals would feel comfortable. There are

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those, certainly, who will question the sincerity of the French Communist Party, recalling the history of Communism in Eastern Europe. Yet it would seem that this Communist Party's respect for legality is genuine. The proof of this would be its behavior during the events of May 1968. We shall never know with certainty whether or not there existed a revolutionary situation in those crucial weeks. We do know, however, that the Communist Party disavowed the violence, and that its refusal to support the revolt of students and workers was a major factor in the defeat of the uprising. For some long-time Communists, such as André Barjonet, this amounted to a betrayal of the ideals of Communism. Charging that the French Communist Party had squelched the most genuine popular uprising since the Commune of 1871, Barjonet resigned from the Party to join a more radical group. It seems accurate to say that the French Communist Party was so accustomed to operating within a legal framework that it was unable to cope with the dynamics of illegality.

Marchais and the Communists had great hopes for *Le Défi démocratique*. It was not unobserved that the book was published by a bourgeois publishing house (Grasset) rather than the Communists' own publisher (Editions sociales). Nor did the Communists blush at employing all the capitalist methods of promotion: advertising, autograph parties, etc. The task of promoting the book was given to Guy Hermier, one of the Party's bright young men who is expected to rise fast in the hierarchy. The importance given to the book by the Communists betrayed its purpose: to give the party a moderate image in preparation for the Presidential elections of 1976 in which the Communists expected to be the decisive factor in the victory of the Socialist, Francois Mitterrand.

When the elections came two years earlier because of President Pompidou's death, the Communists behaved as models of moderation. They immediately called upon Mitterand to become the common candidate of the left, canceled their May Day parade in order not to embarass their ally, declared that they did not expect any of the important cabinet posts, and continued to articulate their commitment to freedom and national independence. After the first round, the usually pro-Moscow Party protested the visit of Soviet Ambassador Chervonenko to Mitterrand's opponent, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, and began discovering affinities between itself and Gaullism in an attempt to attract the votes of Gaullists disaffected after the defeat of Jacques Chaban-Delmas.

Did it work? One would be tempted to answer negatively, since Mitterrand lost. Yet the gains of the left were impressive enough to justify the wisdom of the course chosen. Just last fall, political forecasters did not believe it likely that a Socialist could be elected President of France in 1976. Yet, on short notice, the united left was able to lure nearly half of France's voters to its candidate, just barely losing the Presidency. Before Pompidou's death, Mitterrand himself seemed to think that the legislative elections of 1978 were more promising for the left, and it would seem that the left's best chance in that contest would lie in not changing its strategy of cooperation with the Communist Party, which remains the largest and most disciplined political formation in France. For its part, the French Communist Party, after having been left out of the government for fifty out of fifty-three years, seems ready to make those accommodations necessary for even a secondary role in a leftist government.

RONALD NORDIN

TRANQUILITY: FEBRUARY

(for Wayne Erickson)

Here is a quietness.
Across these wintered hills,
sparsewooded & crookbrushed
to a trick paced bramble,
silence gleams.

All time in whiteness moves
here. Cause
killed task completed
loved & lover softly
bend.

With rising, water
logged, day's haul cut,
heat built slow but climbing,
nothing watches,
waits.

Off in the west
let spun tires whine
& to the north
the bugged saw choke
& snarl;

late afternoons the hawk hangs
in a pitch
of ending, evening —
ward old lamp
eyed answers lull:

Here is a quietness,
high warmth
where peace saps slowly
with no summer's want,
no winter quarrel.

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PFURTNER'S COMPLAINT

ADOLPH SCHALK

Somebody ought to tell the Vatican the facts of life.

SITUATION WANTED: Ex-Dominican, ex-priest and ex-professor of moral theology, 51, seeks teaching or research position enabling him to explore areas of implementation of Vatican II ideals in the field of sexual ethics. Only serious offers guaranteeing complete academic freedom considered. Have qualifications, will travel. Write to: Stephan Pfürtner, c/o Catholic University, Fribourg, Switzerland (mail will be forwarded).

This ad has not appeared in the classified section of any newspaper so far. But it would not surprise anyone familiar with the "Pfürtner Case" in Europe if it did. For it describes the present predicament of one Stephan Pfürtner who voluntarily resigned from his prestigious post as professor of moral theology at the venerable Catholic University of Fribourg, Switzerland, recently. He simultaneously left the Dominican Order and applied for laicization.

To the admiration and amazement of critics and adherents alike, Pfürtner has not left the Catholic Church, nor has he shown even a trace of bitterness, even though his action was motivated solely by measures taken by his religious superiors and the Vatican against his writings and teaching. On the contrary, he has publicly reaffirmed his loyalty to his "church community" and expressed his indomitable optimism "first of all in the liberating power of the Gospel," and, "in the long run, the conviction that the ideals of freedom as expressed at the Second Vatican Council will prevail." "It took many centuries for the present structure to develop," Pfürtner said in a Swiss telecast; "one cannot expect that the wished-for reforms will come about overnight."

"You have shown great courage in your step," TV moderator Marco Volken commented while interviewing Pfürtner, "but many persons are nonetheless asking, 'Why didn't Professor Pfürtner stay in there and continue the fight to the bitter end? Why did he leave voluntarily? Why didn't he let himself be fired?' If you had stayed on and forced the authorities to that kind of a show-down, a Federal court investigation would have become necessary, which would have forced a clarification of the entire case. I am thinking here of the way Rome interferes in the affairs of a Swiss university, I am thinking of the principle of the teaching office itself, and of the *Konvention* of 1889. Why did you quit? Why didn't you carry on the fight to a finish?"

The mild-mannered if outspoken professor meekly explained that perhaps no one likes to wait until he is fired from a position he knows he cannot hold. In addition, he felt that as a foreigner he no longer had the right to be a burden to the university and state authorities who, as his employers, had been so loyal to him throughout the controversy that has been swirling around the Danzig-born theologian since 1971.

"The decisive reason for my leaving, however," elaborated the embattled theologian, "is that the basic prerequisites for teaching and researching in a spirit of true academic freedom are totally lacking." Again, Pfürtner was referring, not to restrictions from within, but to interference from Rome.

The chief bone of contention is Pfürtner's situation ethics approach to morality, notably his now-famous "12 Theses" on norms for sexual behavior. According to Pfürtner, the church's teaching office has no basis for infallible norms of sexual behavior. "In these matters 'reason and love' alone are the only valid criteria."

"The church all too often in the name of morality has perpetuated inhumanity. 'Morality' became the motivating force for 'immorality' far worse than sexual abuses. The church must finally ask herself: To what extent have we through our moral teaching actually promoted immoral attitudes and behavior?"

Pfürtner accuses his church of 'rigorous moralism' and repressive abnegation-morality that imposes unnecessary guilt complexes on millions of persons." He charges Pope Paul VI with "ideological bias, dogmatic rigidity and a shocking insensitivity for the simple, humane needs of people." He cites celibacy as an "instrument of dominance and suppression in the church."

Pfürtner was particularly under fire for his permissive stands on homosexuality, divorce and abortion. Whether or not abortion is permitted, he argues, "can only be decided according to the concrete constellation of the particular case in question. . . . The traditional Catholic appeal to the inviolability of life loses much of its moral force when one recalls how ambivalent the

ADOLPH SCHALK, *a journalist living in Switzerland, is the author of* The Germans *(Prentice-Hall).*

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position of the church has been regarding the death penalty or taking lives in wartime.

"All this talk of the Ten Commandments in regard to sexual behavior is misleading. All regulations concerning sexuality have been invented by a human society. Whether or when a Catholic couple may engage in sexual intercourse before marriage is a matter that must be left up to the couple themselves. . . .

"The pope and the bishops are nothing else than simple human beings. Infallibility is an attribute that cannot be allotted to any mere human authority. . . . The responsible ecclesiastical authorities continually violate basic human and personality rights. . . ."

Of course we have heard all this before. Most of Pfürtner's views are hardly new or sensational. In the Swiss context, however, the Pfürtner controversy acquires an international dimension because it illustrates in a highly revealing manner to what lengths the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith will go to protect its interests. Acting as it did above the heads of the Swiss university authorities in driving Pfürtner to a "voluntary" resignation, the Congregation resorted to methods that presumably evaporated with the supposed disappearance of its notorious predecessor, the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Its heavy-handed interference with the affairs of a foreign state, at the encouragement and behest of the Dominican order and Bishop Pierre Mamie of Geneva-Lausanne and Fribourg, can only be condemned as moral extortion.

The controversy began in 1971, when Professor Pfürtner gave his first public lecture on sexual morality. It had the impact of a bombshell in the conservative climate of Swiss Catholicism, where renewal like a disgraced relative enters through the back door. In a country that stubbornly withholds membership in the UN, that gave women the franchise only two years ago, the Pfürtner case overnight became a *cause célèbre*. Enkindled with a boundless sense of moral outrage, reactionary Bishop Mamie lost no time at all in bringing the matter personally to the attention of Pope Paul VI, Franjo Cardinal Seper, head of the Faith Congregation, and Father Aniceto Fernandez, O.P., Dominican superior general.

Pfürtner was sent on a two-year "leave of absence" by his order, which also slapped all his writings, sermons and lectures under censorship. The Faith Congregation immediately began a secret "extraordinary investigation" of the Pfürtner case completely without his knowledge.

Pfürtner first learned of the investigation when all conclusions had been reached and a formal condemnation of his views was issued to him. Not a single outside theologian was called in for consultation, nor was Pfürtner ever invited to defend himself or to send a representative in his behalf, even though official releases describing the work of the congregation (as quoted in the 1974 *Catholic Almanac*, Our Sunday Visitor), explicitly provide for this. ". . . When necessary and after prior consultation with concerned bishops, [the Faith Congregation] examines books on doctrinal matters and can reprove such works, if the contents so warrant, after *giving the authors the opportunity to defend themselves. . . . The right to appeal, judicial representation, and the consultation of their proper regional conference of bishops, are assured to persons accused of unorthodox doctrine.*" (Italics added.)

In addition, the question can be raised whether it is at all possible today to speak of orthodox doctrine in a theological landscape congested with every conceivable doctrinal variation, contradiction, interpretation and evaluation, whether on the right or on the left? One wonders too why the Faith Congregation has not been called into question with greater intensity and greater demands for norms, guidelines and jurisdiction? What ever happened to the reforms proposed by Josef Cardinal Frings at the Vatican Council? What safeguards if any exist against abuse or arbitrary decisions, and what con-

Stephen Pfurtner's Disputed '12 Theses' On Sexual Morality

1. All commandments and institutions exist for the sake of man. They do not exist for their own sake. Man and his happiness may not be subjugated to them.

2. All men have a right to be happy. The right to sexual happiness is a part of this basic human right. Happiness presupposes the fulfillment of life and signifies a completely good and successful realization of existence.

3. The decisive factor justifying a particular historical behavior or a specific form of sexual morality is the extent to which they contribute to men's happiness. If sexual behavior interferes with lasting human happiness, it becomes immoral. By the same token, if moral injunctions hinder this, then they become invalid. The supreme moral commandment is: let love and reason rule.

4. Sexuality should be primarily regarded as an opportunity toward happiness, for the fulfillment and liberation of human life. Only to the extent that it threatens these can it be regarded as a source of danger.

5. In tension areas or cases of conflict between accepted norms and individual needs and requirements, neither the former nor the latter should be the determining factor. Rather, reason and love, with particular attention to the specific circum-

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trols, commissions and regulations assure democratic procedure at all times?

It is true that the Swiss bishops in a series of talks with Pfürtner did make serious overtures at reconciliation. But in the end there was only one course open to him. He was asked categorically to recant his views and promise in the future to stay within the scope of traditional Catholic views on sex. "This of course I could not do."

Had Pfürtner been attached to some other European university, he might never have had to leave, for professors like Hans Küng at the University of Tübingen, for example, enjoy life tenure and are completely immune from Rome. But the Fribourg University is a special case. As TV moderator Volken, above, indicated, a *Konvention* (treaty) signed in November 15, 1889, gives the Dominican order special privileges including veto rights on all appointees to the theological faculty, and is still in force. It was on the strength of this *Konvention* that the order was able to impose restrictions on Pfürtner, over the heads of the university senate and canton of Fribourg. In addition, there is the strong bond of tradition that gives Fribourg University a special status as "the" Catholic University of Switzerland and, before the Council, one of the great theological centers of Europe.

The Swiss bishops of course breathed a sigh of relief when Pfürtner resigned. They didn't dare go so far as to dismiss him for fear that such a step would reawaken old fears of Catholic interference in secular affairs in a country with considerable religious intolerance. Some Swiss textbooks still describe the Jesuits as a kind of ecclesiastical CIA. In fact, the Pfürtner controversy almost became a decisive factor in the plebiscite held in 1973 on the anti-Jesuit clause in Switzerland's federal constitution. It was only by a narrow margin that the Jesuit-ban dating back to 1848, was defeated and the Jesuit community could shed its parolee status. During the height of the Pfürtner controversy, thousands of mailboxes were stuffed with anti-Jesuit propaganda sponsored by right-wing groups, citing the Pfürtner case as "proof" of Roman interference.

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stances in each case, should be invoked in the interest of the specific happiness of the life of the person who is involved.

6. Whenever sexual activity involves the lives of others, one must take their happiness just as much into consideration as one's own. Gratification at others' expense is immoral.

7. Sexuality by its very nature has social implications. This belongs to its complete development if it is to be effective. The concerns of society, wherever it is involved, are thereby continually to be taken into account.

8. But society does not have the right to intervene in the sexual freedom of adults, as long as they do not create social harm through their activity.

9. Educational measures and social regulations regarding youth are good to the extent that they leave open the way to a responsible exercise of freedom. They must be sustained by the explicit intention for the emancipation of young people and give them legitimate scope for play and experimentation. They become irresponsible if they merely serve to inculcate a false dependence on parents, educators, or society. Interdictive measures may only be employed in those instances where sexual behavior norms seriously threaten the lasting happiness of young people.

10. Human sexuality is replete with psychic and functional implications for individual and society. They are manifest in love partnerships, in the creation of larger communities, in the awakening of We-consciousness, in the formation of families, in the propagation of the human race, in social creativity; in games and festive or ritual events; and in gratification and emotional bliss, especially by complementary partnership as a means of personal liberation and maturation. Whoever therefore discriminates against sexuality blocks the humanization of man as well as his culture and capacity for socialization. He interferes with man's psychological harmony and personal maturity.

11. Gratification is nothing evil. Sexual capacity for pleasure is a human value. However, both must be brought into dynamic relation with the other psychic elements in human life as well as the deeper psychic reality of sexuality itself. They must remain open to the larger values and to partnership. Narcissism and autoeroticism are forms of sexual immaturity, in extreme cases even signs of sexual pathology.

12. Sensuality alone may not be the determining principle for the genuine development of sexuality. For one's individuation, for the I-consciousness as well as the social consciousness of the individual, a relationship with reality is necessary, the willingness to give. One who lives only for the sake of sensuality is unable to serve, unable to stand firm. One should be trained with the capacity for restraint and even frustration to an appropriate degree. But man's capacity for pleasure aind gratification and love may not thereby be laid waste, but must be released again and again, expanded, but in the final analysis subordinated to the capacity to love.

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Dr. W. Renschler, a prominent member of the National Council (Swiss parliament) has introduced a motion to abolish the *Konvention* as "an antiquated relic of the past having no relevance to current times." He called the *Konvention* "a blatant interference with internal Swiss affairs and an obvious violation of the Federal Constitution."

Father Ludwig Kaufmann, S.J., editor of the prestigious weekly, *Orientierung*, stated in a radio interview, "the most important lesson to be learned from the Pfürtner case is the need for greater clarity, greater transparency in the solution of any conflict. . . . as for the so-called extraordinary process [of the Faith Congregation] this is nothing of the kind. It violates every modern person's sense of justice. This must be changed! . . . A second lesson is that the Swiss bishops in my opinion should be prepared for a greater confrontation with Rome, as long as such inhuman processes are still in force. And thirdly, the authorities, such as those in Fribourg, should have the courage to make a clean sweep when modern principles of academic freedom are threatened by the church. They must revise the contract with the Dominican order. One can understand that the Swiss bishops also wish to have a say as to who teaches and what is taught, but even here, this must be regulated with greater intelligibility and on a solid and fair basis."

Meanwhile, Pfürtner has become too hot for Switzerland. Before his resignation it appeared as though he might be appointed to the University of Bern as a consultant in the newly-formed research group for medical ethics. But the Bern authorities had second thoughts and rejected his application. Commented Pfürtner: "Professionally all my hopes are completely in the air."

MAKING IT

THE SCREEN

Eleven years ago in *The Great Escape,* Charles Bronson played a claustrophobic Pole who digs a tunnel to freedom for himself and his fellow POWs. He has volunteered to do all the digging, he explains at one point, because he hates it so much. It gives him such anxiety to be down in that dark hole, he will get the job done quicker than anyone else. In Bronson's mouth this peculiar explanation of the character's motives has an almost pathetic ring of truth too. The truth is that Bronson himself had been a claustrophobic young Pole, Charles Buchinsky, working in the Pennsylvania coal mines and hating every minute of it, dying to escape.

And like the character who digs his way out of the German POW camp, Bronson succeeded by making his disadvantages into his opportunities. Just as the character uses his claustrophobia as an engine for digging, Bronson used the physique and personality that marked him as a child of the mines to become someone else, a star. The tough, sullen nobody who never had a chance got his chance in movies by playing tough, sullen nobodies. By being who he was, Bronson escaped from who he was.

That Bronson can still work this vein, and make it pay, is apparent in at least one of the two films he has just released. He plays the title character of the film, *Mr. Majestyk,* who is a Coloradoan trying to make a go of a melon farm. But first a labor racketeer attempts to run off Majestyk's hands, and then, when Majestyk lands in jail because he ran off the racketeer instead, a Mafia hit-man who is also a prisoner develops a vendetta against him as well. (The hit-man is played by Al Lettieri with his usual viciousness. One of these days Lettieri is going to disgust himself to death. He's going to get up in the morning, look in the mirror, and just keel over from self-disgust.)

As always, the job of work that Bronson is loath to do—in this case, fighting off gangsters—is the very one that he has to do. What we find so pleasing in his predicament is how able he is to handle it. Right at the beginning Majestyk's character is established in the scene where the racketeer tries to intimidate him. He takes away the man's shotgun and punches him in the groin with it. Then he says, as if seriously concerned to be helpful, "I think you're in the wrong business, mister."

It's a well-placed remark; in fact, it's such a good touch that director Richard Fleischer has Majestyk repeat it again at the end. Its effectiveness is its implication that the obverse is also true—that in some ways Majestyk is in the wrong business too. This Majestyk doesn't have to grow melons (we think to ourselves), *he* could be the hit-man: that fellow Bronson doesn't have to dig coal mines, he could be a movie star! But of course Bronson's stardom depends on Majestyk's wanting, and getting, nothing more than a chance to go back to picking his melons, which is precisely what happens.

Up to a point Bronson's other release, *Death Wish,* appears to be more of the same. One of the scenes that occurs in its first half seems intended to establish for its central figure, Paul Kersey, the same character that Majestyk has. Kersey is an upper-middle-class New Yorker whose wife is killed and daughter raped by muggers, so to get away for awhile he lets his job take him to Tucson. In this particular scene Kersey's Tucson host has dragged him to a pistol club where, to everyone's amazement, Kersey proves a crack shot. Oh, he knows how to use guns, Kersey admits, but he doesn't like to. Again, the reluctant hero.

As the plot develops, however, Kersey is someone neither reluctant nor heroic. Instead of being the victim of a vendetta like Majestyk, Kersey becomes the perpetrator of one. He decides to get even for his wife and daughter by luring muggers into attacking him in order

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that he can kill them. Looked at one way, I suppose Bronson is here still someone who merely turns out to be more than the bullies picking on him bargained for. But these aren't the same variety of bullies. Whatever satisfaction we took when Bronson gunned down Al Lettieri, it's not the same when his target is black and Puerto Rican teenagers. No stretch of the imagination can make him the underdog now. Even the police help him.

Besides, Kersey enjoys himself too much to be likable. Director Michael Winner does one scene where, having clobbered a mugger with a blackjack his first night out, Kersey returns home and exultantly wields the weapon at his furniture until his frenzy bursts it. By this action alone Kersey makes it clear he is not Majestyk, who would be ashamed to give in to such gloating. Unlike the sort of person we are used to seeing Bronson play, Kersey is someone who literally goes out looking for trouble.

The flaw is ultimately not in Paul Kersey's character, though, so much as in Bronson's stardom. Such stardom is itself based upon a death wish, that wish to escape being the person life has so completely endowed you to play, and there is always the danger that you may get your wish. You may kill through your success the very personality that made that success possible. When this happens, someone like Paul Kersey emerges. Kersey is no longer the man Bronson was but someone far less attractive: the man Bronson has become. In interviews Bronson even endorses Kersey's vigilantism.

I was tempted to say earlier that it is ironical Bronson was cast as he was in *The Great Escape,* but really there's nothing ironical in it. The acting of a man who must always play himself is necessaarily without irony, which requires some distance from the character. This is the great limitation of the sort of stardom Bronson has achieved. But in all fairness I ought to admit that Bronson isn't complaining. He certainly doesn't miss doing serious drama, a kind of acting he found uncongenial when he was first breaking in, and the acting he is doing is perhaps the only sort that true stardom ever permits anyway.

The Russian pioneer V. I. Pudovkin pointed out in the earliest days of the movies that it is a medium in which the actor has always to rely on who he is, not pretend to be someone else. Pudovkin was brought to this insight by studying Stanislavski, whose "Method" acting has had a great influence on postwar American film actors too. Lee Strasburg's Actor's Studio, which was founded on Method principles, has produced Marlon Brando, Lee J. Cobb, James Dean, Montgomery Clift, Rod Steiger and Al Lettieri. As Lettieri's costarring role in *Mr. Majestyk* demonstrates, Bronson fits right in with the Actor's Studio alumni.

Yet his own stardom represents something much more obvious and fundamental about film acting—something that inhered in films before Pudovkin and that moves audiences far larger than those the Actor's Studio can reach. It is a literal and instinctive projection of that self which the Method would exploit more programmatically and eclectically. As long as a star like Bronson can preserve in himself and his roles the rough innocence which got him on the screen in the first place, he will go on being a star. But once his own success separates him from those origins—once he truly does escape being that character who appeals to everyone in the world except him—he is lost.

COLIN L. WESTERBECK, JR.

BOB CORDING

GRACE

Amid a Sunday's walk around the block
as parents impart the names
of forsythia, Japanese maple, rhododendron
to their children,
a bald eagle
breasts the wind over the local reservoir:

suspended in repose, undeniably the great,
rare bird, appears in majesty and power—
Haliaeetus leucocephalus leucocephalus—
overwhelming the mind's disbelief.
Like Thomas, the suburbs stand hearts stiff
filling the holes of imagination with belief.

PATRICK O'SHEEL

THE GAMBLERS

I fought it off, death
That reached over my children
Impatient with simple maiming
And sought the decisive stroke.

There's been a long connivance,
The viscera concurring
Inward to self-destruction
Against the racial pang.

Entreaties lushly romantic
Spoke death's decencies
Softly, to say there could be
An end to the washing of hands.

And yet— imperfectly matched—
The gamblers are true to the game,
Lusting for one more round, blood
In the eye: So with me.

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GOING HOME AGAIN

MICHAEL NOVAK

Writing now at the end of July, I anticipate a first trip to the land of my grandparents. Only a week is available to me. But I do hope to drive through Slovakia and to find the villages—and, possibly, some now unknown relatives—in the counties of Spis and Saris. I will visit the mountains where the legendary folk hero of Slovakia, Janosik, hid with his mountain band and preyed upon the wealthy nobles. Perhaps it will be a disappointing visit. Perhaps, almost surely, I will be quite a distant "foreigner." I do not know the language. My knowledge of my own land's history is rudimentary and wholly self-taught.

The impulse that draws me back surprises me by its strength. I recall Elia Kazan's saying: "As the years go on, I find myself more and more Greek."

I remember my grandfather playing his violin and in his face the knowledge of another world. Many of the young knew how to play an instrument in his days; such arts died for awhile in America. My grandfather left Slovakia at night, leaping into the darkness of a train, crossing the Danube in a small boat, in order to escape being drafted into the foreign Hungarian army. Scores of Slovaks were arrested in that decade for speaking the Slovak language in public. Those who had been serfs, freed hardly a generation earlier—as long as as blacks were emancipated in the U.S.—were being driven off the land by overpopulation, famine, lack of land.

Each year, hundreds of thousands migrated seasonally all over Europe seeking work and soon, as well, to the United States. Usually the males left alone, and returned with a purse large enough to purchase land and to marry. In some years, as many as five out of eight who left for the United States returned to Slovakia to live. Yet, as times worsened, two million of the nearly six million Slovaks emigrated for good, in a period of about 40 years, 1880-1920: to the U.S., to Canada, and to Latin America.

Some of the great tides of European history rose earlier in Czechoslovakia than elsewhere. A unified, in some ways, democratic empire came early, and a thriving urban life, together with a great university.The Reformation arrived a century earlier than in Germany or England. The independence of separate valleys and rural ways encouraged a number of democratic traditions. Literacy was common; almost all Czech and Slovak immigrants to the U.S. could at least read and write. Even today, the audience for books and the arts on Czechoslovakia is extraordinarily high. Military empire is almost unknown to Czechoslovak history; the national heroes tend to be philosophers and poets. It is a modest culture, no bursting at the seams with glory and achievement. Many who are émigrés cherish a love for it.

It is satisfying now, in the third generation in America, to recognize so many young Czechoslovak historians entering the ranks of American historians. Harvard University Press will soon publish a splendid piece of urban history (concerning Cleveland) by Josef Barton. Mark Stolarik has just completed a still more advanced thesis, also drawing heavily on materials from Cleveland, for Timothy Smith. John Bodnar, who is directing the Pennsylvania archives in Harrisburg, is guiding a half dozen major projects, one of the most significant being an oral history of the relations between blacks and Slavs in Pittsburgh and other cities in Pennsylvania from 1900-1930. These young historians have examined records in Czechoslovakia as well as in the United States. They are in the vanguard of a newer generation of historians who know the native languages of the immigrants, and who are concerned—at last—with giving the rest of us what we have been without: a history.

Most of the Slovaks west of the Allegheny river in Pennsylvania, and particularly those around Johnstown, came from the two countries whence my grandparents came. Frequently, the Slovak laity insisted on controlling their own churches; more than once they deposed a pastor or marched en masse on the bishop's chancery. Not even American Catholic historians have told the story of the Slavic immigrants accurately.

Catholic scholars in almost every field have a magnificent opportunity these days. Fresh points of view in history, sociology, anthropology, political science, literature and philosophy are possible, for nearly one-quarter of the American population has been left out of the standard descriptions and themes about the nation. Who would guess that, demographically, Slavs are the most numerous ethnic group in New York State? Or that Italian Catholics in the U.S. outnumber Irish Catholics? Much about us—even obvious, statistical material—remains to be inquired into and digested.

That many Catholics are beginning to get in touch with their own history, and to start afresh in their own intellectual and creative work, is one of the happiest signs in American Catholic intellectual life. Perhaps, at last, the promise is to be fulfilled—and not where many at first looked for it, in "Americanization." All of us have learned much from America. It is time, now, for America also to be changed by genuinely new and profound impulses from the greatest mass migration in world history.

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BRIAN MOORE: PRIVATE PERSON

BRUCE COOK

Brian Moore's persistent and growing reputation as a novelist seems, in in an odd way, due to the kind of writer he *isn't*, rather than the kind he is. He isn't, for example a writer like Jimmy Breslin doing sports for the local NBC outlet in New York. Nor is he a Norman Mailer, running for mayor, barnstorming the college circuit when he runs out of the readies. He doesn't say naughty things on talk shows—because he doesn't appear on them. He isn't a society figure. He is neither a friend nor an enemy of the Kennedy family. He isn't living with a movie star. He is simply what he is: a writer.

His sort is an anomaly in this age of the media freak and the celebrity writer. Partly because he has had a modicum of good fortune—film options on his novels have been picked up at crucial moments and films were actually produced from two of his books—but owing most of all to his willingness to live modestly and work at occasional odds and ends of journalism and film-writing that have come his way, Brian Moore has managed to live his life as a novelist at a remove from the temptations that seem so irresistible to other writers today. Unlike some, he has apparently never confused the writing he does to make money with his real work. And he has never been so desperate as to sign on as a full-time Professor of Creative Writing at Whatever State University, for this —as he must know—can be just as debilitating to a writer as the celebrity trap.

No, the truly difficult thing is to sit at your desk day after day, year after year, and do your own work—and that is what Moore has done. It's queer perhaps that this should seem remarkable, that it should somehow bring distinction to him, for this used to be thought of as the writer's life. It may not have provided much in the way of real power and fame, but still it was thought to offer compensations in freedom and independence. Besides, this is the only way, really, the work can be done, and there was at one time widespread agreement that the work was worth doing. It was its own best reward. Can there be any wonder that writing today should be in such straits (I had originally intended a reference to the sickness of the novel, but the crisis is generalized), when nobody seems to remember anymore that the writer's role is to write?

All of which should give you an idea of what sort of writer Brian Moore isn't. As for explaining what sort he is—as to what his concerns and intentions are as an artist—I could make no better beginning than to quote a tribute to him by the Canadian novelist Mordecai Richler: "Only a few contemporaries, say Brian Moore, live up to what I once took to be the novelist's primary moral responsibility, which is to be the loser's advocate. To tell us what it's like to be Judith Hearne. Or a pinched Irish school teacher."

Richler was referring there to Moore's first two novels, *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne* and *The Feast of Lupercal*. They are in their way as good as any he has done, which is not to say at all that there has been no development in his work. It is just that when his first book appeared in 1955, he suddenly emerged as a mature and full-blown talent. A precise, moving, and carefully drawn portrait of an alcoholic Belfast spinster in a crisis of faith, *Judith Hearne* is as unlike the ordinary first novel as *The Feast of Lupercal* is from the usual second. That is to say, there is no falling off from one to the next, no faltering of any sort in his early novels. The Belfast background of these first two made him seem much more an Irish writer than he may even have thought himself at the time they were written, for Moore was a good 10 years out of Ireland by then. He had emigrated to Canada and taken a job on the *Montreal Gazette*, and his experience as an immigrant—or a "new Canadian," as they will have it—provides the background for his third novel, *The Luck of Ginger Coffee*. Let it suffice to say that Ginger's luck is mostly bad: he has emigrated from the Irish Republic (in this, as in many other important particulars, we see that he is *not* in a literal way, Brian Moore) to Canada, hoping to match his prospects with his ambitions, as he never could in Ireland. And though none of it goes quite according to his expectations, he retains enough of the old bluster and optimism at book's end to let him continue. The book—his only novel with a Canadian setting—won him the Governor General's prize, Canada's top literary award, and established him as a *Canadian* writer which, in spite of about 15 years in this country, he insists he is today.

He came down to New York on a literary fellowship, met people, got his bearings, and responded to his new surroundings by capturing them in a remarkable novel, which is in some ways his best, entitled *An Answer from Limbo*. It is the longest and the most technically ambitious of all those written before or since—and in the book his ambitions are very largely

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realized. From three separate points of view, it tells of the blind desire of Brendan Tierney, an Irish immigrant in New York, to be a writer, an important writer—and of those, his wife and mother, who suffer the consequences of that ambition. Nobody, I think, has ever written as ruthlessly and honestly of that quality of literary aspiration *in extremis*—nor, for that matter, has anyone this side of Flaubert treated female sexuality, rampant and predatory, quite as Moore does here in his portrait of Jane Tierney. It is a harrowingly intense, and in some ways a shocking and unpleasant book, but *An Answer from Limbo* represents a peak effort by a writer of enormous ability who was stretching his talent to the utmost at that point in his career.

After such an effort, there was bound to be some slight falling-off—and there was. (Only in a relative sense, though, for he is so much the modern master that his weakest work ranks with the strongest of many writers better known than he.) *The Emperor of Ice Cream* is that generic first novel that Brian Moore refused to write at the beginning of his career. Autobiographical and episodic, it is the story of the passage to manhood of young Gavin Burke, whose failure to qualify for university has bitterly disappointed his exacting father, a Belfast physician. These are the days of the so-called "phony war," the end of 1939 and the beginning of 1940, when the Allies had squared off with Germany but the fight had not begun in earnest. Gavin joins the Air Raid Precautions service as part of the first aid team, and he becomes a joke to one and all, for the war itself is a joke to the Irish who seem so safely removed from it all. When at last, one terrible week in 1941, the German bombers come to raid Belfast, the war is suddenly no longer funny. And Brian Moore does succeed in making the terrible destruction of that week as real and frightening to the reader as it must have been in his own memory—for in this, as in most other details, the novel closely follows the author's experience. Still, the change caused in Gavin's father and a few others by the bombing is a bit sudden to be completely acceptable; they cave in, rather than change.

His next two were American novels —written here and set in the United States. Just as much as *An Answer from Limbo*, the two—*I Am Mary Dunne* and *Fergus*—catch the pulse and feeling of American life. This is no little thing. Very, very few foreign writers of fiction have written convincingly about America or Americans. You have to have lived here a while, and more important (and still more difficult) you have to like us, to do the job right. Both of the novels, too, written with the compression and concentration of short stories, deal with what might be termed in the broadest, non-clinical sense, identity crises. In a period of less than a day, Mary Dunne, a Canadian-born, thrice-married New Yorker must determine, to her own satisfaction at least (*Memento ergo sum*) just who she is; and in a like period, Fergus Fadden, a novelist and screenwriter living on the West Coast, must lay the Irish ghosts of his Belfast past.

It is worth noting that with both Mary Dunne and Fergus Fadden, their identity troubles stem at least indirectly from their national origins—*who* they are is fixed by *where* they are from. This is something of which Moore would be more deeply conscious than most writers. For although in his fiction he had always resisted making large statements about cultures, national identities, and so on, he is clearly aware of their importance. Working as he does, so close to his characters, such things must be discussed (if discussed at all) in the subtlest ways and only as they affect the individuals about whom he writes. In a way, the sort of writer he is—private, devoted to writing as an end in itself—is the only sort who could write the intensely felt, personal, and *close* novels he has. The style, once again, is the man.

The month that *Fergus* was published (September, 1970), an article by Brian Moore appeared in *The Atlantic* entitled "Bloody Ulster," which dealt, obviously, with the civil strife in Northern Ireland. It is a very moving piece of journalism. Cast in the first person, it weaves Moore's observations on what must have been a recent trip to Belfast with memories stimulated by the sights of "this place which still, foolishly, I sometimes call 'home.'" His eye-witness reports, as well as his memories, are directed toward explaining the conflict there—and he is, in many ways, uniquely qualified to do that. And interwoven through all of this, almost as fine thread through a heavy tweed, are Moore's conclusions and recommendations. They are rather tentatively and elliptically expressed, but they come down to this: He sees this one—quite accurately, I think—as different from all previous times of strife in Northern Ireland because of the presence of the television cameras there. The oppressed Catholic minority in Northern Ireland has caught the attention of the world with its struggle because of television and now caught, it must be held by whatever means if any sort of real change is to be brought about there. "We must now become wards of the English state," he writes. "England must, at last, accept its responsibility toward us, which is to rule us, directly, totally, as part of that 'United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland' which our passports proclaim us to be."

Note the "we" and the "us." The situation in Ireland must have troubled him sorely then, and no doubt it still does. So much so that I believe his next two books were written to deal with the problems—personal problems and problems for him as a writer—raised by bloody Ulster. There was, first of all, the question of terrorism. He had commented dramatically on the violence in that *Atlantic* piece: "It must escalate. Blood must run in the streets. Ulster people must die like dogs. Unless they do, nothing will change." His next book, *The Revolution Script*, was a work of non-fiction (not his first, for he had done a Time-Life book on Ireland a few years be-

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fore) which dealt with the consesequences of blood in the streets. Not literally, of course, for it had to do only with two related acts of terror—and neither took place in Ireland.

Essentially, *The Revolution Script* is a documentary—or nonfiction novel, if you prefer that phrase—treating the kidnapping of James Cross, the Senior British Trade Commissioner in Montreal by a cell of young French-Canadian separatists. Part of that story, of course, is the consequent kidnapping and murder of Pierre Laporte, the labor minister of Quebec province by another group of separatists. This was certainly the big story out of Canada that year—and after all, Moore, a Canadian citizen, had been a newspaperman in Montreal for years and knew the city well—so why shouldn't he be the one to write it? No reason—except that during the time of the Cross kidnapping and the writing of the book about it, Moore was most deeply concerned with the situation in Northern Ireland, if we are to judge from the passionate tone of the "Bloody Ulster" piece in *The Atlantic*. But this concern must, to some extent, also have attracted him to the subject of the Cross kidnapping. And if, for whatever reason, he felt constrained from writing directly of Northern Ireland, treating the acts of terror in Canada gave him an opportunity to handle gingerly and at a distance matters that concerned him, personally, far more deeply.

What, then, about *Catholics*? This short novel (only 107 pages in its hardback edition with lots of blank pages between chapters) stands a fair chance of becoming his best known work since *The Lonely Passion of Judith Hearne*. It won the prestigious and lucrative W. H. Smith Award for him in England and was given an excellent production in a television film adaptation starring Trevor Howard last fall on CBS. I believe that *Catholics*, too, was written at least partly in response to the crisis in Northern Ireland. This is a fable ostensibly about the future of the Catholic Church—the old personal religious values have been enveloped by a kind of ultra-secular hyper-Berriganism—written by one who has said often and emphatically that he no longer considers himself a Catholic. I, for one, believe him. The book seems well, rather than passionately, written. Is it really about the abbot's loss of faith? Yes, partly—and in this it is convincing. But the Catholic context of the piece seems a bit neat, as though Moore had carefully rendered a world wholly imaginary (for to him, perhaps, it is). This suggests to me that *Catholics* was written for a much different reason—that it is not *about* the Catholic Church at all, except as the Church serves as a handy metaphor. Its importance to Brian Moore, I believe, is as a defense of the contemplative life, the private life, the life of the writer. Perhaps he sees himself as a sort of monk—writers often do—laboring in isolation, offering it up. If that is so, then the emissary from Rome in *Catholics* who visits the island monastery and brings the outside world in with him, changing things so drastically, probably came there by way of Belfast. For it is the strife there that impinges directly upon Brian Moore as a writer, threatens his right to continue doing the kind of deeply personal novels that he has done in the past. Will he continue doing them? Or will he confront bloody Ulster directly? Please take note that the abbot, in spite of the fact that all the moral force is on his side, gives in finally to Rome.

BOOKS

SOFT SLAVERY

NATHAN IRVIN HUGGINS

Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery

ROBERT FOGEL & STANLEY L. ENGERMAN

Little, Brown, $8.95

Time on the Cross: Evidence and Methods: A Supplement

ROBERT FOGEL & STANLEY L. ENGERMAN

Little, Brown, $12.50

Seldom has the advent of a historical study been greeted with such publicity and ballyhoo as the two volumes under review, which claim to overturn traditional interpretations of American slavery. Calling themselves cliometricians (the historians' counterpart to econometricians), the authors insist that they have cut beneath the sentimentality and moralizing that they think has plagued the historical literature. Because they find slavery to have been not only profitable but viable—sustaining the lives of slaves as well as being productive—those who have an ideological or emotional stake in either a paternalistic master or a totally victimized slave will make these volumes the subject of heated argument.

Much of the controversy will be provoked by the tone of these authors. They are advocates, arguing their *case* like lawyers rather than scholars. In their passion to defend their methodology and their position, they often claim too much for the significance of their findings.

The broad conclusions of this study are not so new and revolutionary as the authors would have us believe. There are no reputable historians who would defend the "straw man" that Fogel and Engerman set out to destroy. It has been almost twenty years since Kenneth Stampp's *Peculiar Institution* introduced many of their "corrections" to the literature, and

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that book has since become the principal authority on the subject. Stampp concluded: (1) slavery was profitable, and slave owners received an adequate return on their investment; (2) slavery was not economically moribund on the eve of the Civil War; (3) slaveholders were optimistic enough to pay record-high prices for slaves in 1860 despite the threat to future growth of a political policy prohibiting slavery from the western territories; (4) slaves were productive and reasonably efficient workers as a result of the absolute authority of the master using, among other techniques, coercion and fear; (5) slavery was compatible to an industrializing South; (6) there was no evidence of slave-breeding in the form of stud-farms outside of abolitionists' fantasies.

When Fogel and Engerman announce identical generalizations, however, they claim to have "corrected" the traditional interpretation. They differ from Stampp of course. For Stampp, coercion and fear were important elements in the motivation of slave productivity. He also gives greater importance than Fogel and Engerman do to slave resistance and sabotage. Stampp would consider special inducements by masters for child-bearing women to be a subtle kind of breeding. Fogel and Engerman would prefer to see it as evidence of the relative good treatment of slaves. But such interpretations are matters of judgment and not proved by the quantitative data in these volumes. On such matters cliometricians are like the rest of us, obliged to rely on instinct and bias. Unlike the rest of us, however, these authors are not inclined to make their biases explicit.

These new volumes have made some important contributions to our understanding of slavery, nonetheless. They give the most sophisticated discussion, so far, of the economics of slavery and the growth of the South relative to the rest of the country in the mid-nineteenth century. They give evidence of a wide variety of slave occupations, and their personnel. They exploit data on medical treatment and diet, showing that slaves were, on the whole, as well cared for as northern industrial workers. They infer from their data that there was a viable slave family and family life. They illustrate, from data at the very large New Orleans slave market, that family break-up through sale was quite small.

Still there is room to quarrel. Like most scholars of slavery, they generalize from data in the nineteenth century large plantations. The process and evolution of the institution from the seventeenth century is ignored, as is the condition of slaves on small holdings. Using statistics as their principal base for generalizations, their results are averages, trends, and profiles. Historical significance is sometimes lost sight of.

It may be important for us to know that southern economic growth was only slightly behind that of the North and ahead of much of western Europe. But it remains to be shown whether southerners perceived that "reality," and if they did, what comfort they would have drawn from their advance over French and Italian peasants. We are told that planters received a reasonably high rate of profit and, at another point, that slaves, over their lifetime, received a 90 percent return on their production. Such conclusions boggle the mind and make one feel victim of bookkeeping legerdemain. We are told, from evidence of food, housing, medical care, etc., that slaves were about as well off as industrial workers. All because the numbers tell us so.

It is just such an equation that betrays the fault of the statistical mentality. There was something in the condition of the slave that made him more suppressed than the free laborer. However well off he might have been, that condition remained. To observe, for instance, that the caloric intake of prisoners at Attica is higher than that of farm workers may be true, but it distorts rather than illuminates. Even if Fogel's and Engerman's estimates are correct—that slaves received 90 percent of their product as return over their lifetime—the form of that return was simply for their survival as slaves and was not available for their mobility.

Everyone, including slave-holders, understood that it was peculiar to own men as property in 19th century America. They had to create a special body of laws and institutions to sustain their "peculiar institution." Furthermore, it was not just a labor system; it was a racial system. Black people were presumed slave, and white people were presumed free. The fact that the system was profitable, that slaves were efficient and productive labor, and that men have wanted to deceive themselves about both points is important to know. But left at that, the whole point of what slavery was about—what apparently compelled the authors to choose this strangely non-cliometric title—is missing.

Much of the publicity about these volumes assumes that blacks will be offended by an interpretation that finds slaves relatively well off. But there have been black scholars who have for some time insisted on viable institutions within slave life. John Blassingame's *The Slave Community* argues for organic and self-sustaining families and religious life. As a black man, I find no discomfort in a view of slavery that assumes physically and mentally healthy individuals and families. Indeed, such a view provides the logical underpinnings for a hypothesis of a strong and continuous Afro-American culture and character. Most black scholars should be pleased to find evidence supporting what many of us have claimed. Yet, I think that it is still reasonable to insist that even cliometricians make clear that there are differences between being slave and free, even if those distinctions cannot be analyzed by high-speed computers.

The authors have wisely published their study in two volumes. The first contains the full and complete text. For those who want to follow the technical, methodological, and theoretical basis for their argument, that material is in the second volume.[1] The authors may be claiming too much

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when they see their work as a "turning point" in the study of slavery. It will, nevertheless, provoke considerable discussion.

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

ROBERT M. PIRSIG

Morrow, $7.95

JOHN HEIDENRY

Mr. Pirsig describes his book as a series of chautauquas. This deliberately anachronistic term evokes an image of a bygone America in the days before radio and television, or for that matter motorcycles, when people assembled in the summer outdoors for two or three days of edifying lectures, concerts, and recreation. In large part this is, to the contrary, a repellent and dispiriting work by a not very likable man. If all the speakers on the chautauqua circuit were like the author, it is no wonder the phenomenon has died out.

Perhaps it is true that some books are like thermometers which generalize for us whether the cumulative sicknesses of our society are ebbing or flowing on the fever chart. That is to say, a work that is the opposite of the platitudinizing or moral-cancer-diagnosticating the heads of church and state. *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* is like a thermometer protruding from the anus of America. Reading it is like taking a reading of 106° in the shade.

On one level Pirsig tries to recount a rather monotonous motorcycle trip he took with his eleven-year-old son from their home in St. Paul to the Pacific coast of California. What makes the narrative almost compelling reading, however, is that the journey is also a going back into another time and space somewhere in Montana where the author was a person he calls "Phaedrus," after the ancient Greek teacher of rhetoric denounced by Plato. For years before Pirsig became a writer and editor of technical journals, he was a teacher of philosophical rhetoric, obsessed like some pedagogical Don Quixote by the meaning of "quality" and the notion of reality. Somewhere he missed the windmill, or hit it full-square, and wound up in a mental ward. As father and son travel across the lonely blacktop into the Great Plains we learn that the younger Pirsig too may be "mentally disturbed." What revolts the reader is the father's almost pathological unwillingness to reach out, help his boy, show him just a little love that will save both of them.

What is between them, in a sense, is the motorcycle. Pirsig has no intention of providing for this ubiquitous machine what the great Taoist masters have done for archery or the art of serving tea. Or he does so in a transmutation of Zen which Dr. Suzuki is not likely to have foreseen.

The motorcycle is a portable technology and is in that sense a "thingification" of America. When Pirsig came out of the sanatorium he abandoned the teaching of rhetoric as futile. There was nothing about the quality of ideas one could get one's hands good and dirty with. After a stint at Benares Hindu University in India he wound up writing technical manuals. He derides his colleagues in this profession who neither understand what they are writing about—the machine, technology —nor know how to write. As Eric Hoffer correctly is quoted as saying in a jacket blurb, Pirsig is a born writer. His technological instructions, whether on computers or motorcycles, are likely accurate, logical, in a way poetic. This is because he has a passion for wanting the reader to understand technology and not run away from it. If there is one valuable lesson in this book it is this: the next time your radio stops working, or your automobile breaks down, try to fix it yourself. Pirsig says the future of America is the machine and it will keep breaking down until we take the Zen approach, look upon the busted radio, in a sense, as ourselves, forbear dropping it off at the repair shop, and learn to fix it. What is the rush? We have a month, he tells his son, to get to California.

So there are chautauquas about how to repair a motorcycle, and others again, almost lyrical, on blackbirds and grey skies in Montana, and many more on insanity, the arguments of philosophers from Phaedrus to Hegel on the meaning of quality; and so on. But if the reader is in some ways enlightened, he certainly feels little moral elevation.

What is frightful about Pirsig is his technological hatred for what he calls the Romanticist, by which he means the person who really is unable even to concentrate on reading some simple instructions on, say, how to operate an electric can-opener, or fix a tire. Pirsig has for all practical purposes metaphorized the repair of machines, trivial or complicated, as equivalent to his own rehabilitation into a "sane person." Implicit in the book is a doctrinaire Zen idea that self and thing are identical, which is nonsense.

At the end of the narrative Pirsig sketches a rather ambiguous chautauqua in which the reader is unable to de-

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termine whether the author recants, in whole or part, his technological credo or not. Patently he has been treating his son as a machine. It is the relationship of a mechanic with a troublesome set of valves, loving and hating, but above all wanting it to work *right*.

Pirsig does get an insight into his heartlessness, as it were. In a manner too complicated to recapitulate here, the father realizes that the son has been "carrying" him emotionally despite the reverse situation of father carrying the son on the back of the motorcycle. In a rather touching scene on a beach, at journey's end, there is a real communication of love between the two for the first time in years.

The trouble is, the son will be "all right" now because he has the "right attitudes." Pirsig comes to the realization, in what can only be described as a rhetorical tour de force, that he has never been insane; and the son graduates from thing to mechanic.

Pirsig has considerable integrity. He is like a forerunner of a new kind of technological intellectual: not just the graduate out of engineering school without the least interest in the humanities; but someone who has learned a great deal about philosophy and literature only to repudiate it, or subsume it to the qualities of the machine.

Perhaps the most "romanticism" is to treat a motorcycle as the self and time as something that can be divided into equal Zen parts. Some things *are* urgent. The self is not always so important—sometimes it is the least important. When the radio falls apart one ought to try to fix it—providing one is not too busy doing something better like trying to read Tolstoy, or make Mozart live again; or, when it comes to that, writing one's own *War and Peace*, or distributing one's goods to the peasants. The invidious and paradoxical thing about Pirsig's vision of technology is that it is concerned only about "values" (the subtitle is "An Inquiry into Values"), not people. And yet the end result is to find oneself the complete egotist: everything is the self. The motorcycle and the rider are equal partners on the long journey towards eternity. The new chautauqua is the motorcycle manual. To misappropriate the words of Katherine Mansfield, if this is the future, then I'm glad I have consumption.

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The Pope's Jews

SAM WAAGENAAR

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GABRIEL GERSH

Max Beerbohm has depicted, in a well-known cartoon, Arnold Bennett at the height of his influence and fame confronted by his young self. "All gone according to plan, you see," says the old self, resplendent in his dinner suit, to which the young self, perky, ill-dressed and not too sure of his vowel sounds, replies, "My plan, you know." If there is a meeting place beyond the grave where those of similar tastes foregather, one can imagine the shade of Hitler, inflated by his memories of the holocausts of concentration camps, confronted by many pious but anti-Semitic Christians, self-effacing in such company, but daring to say, "My plan, you know."

Mr. Waagenaar's book belongs to the spate of postwar literature that indicts the Christian world—particularly the Catholic Church—for either its indifference to the plight of the Jews or its readiness to join the chorus of those who shouted "My plan, you know."

The focus of the book's attention is the Italian Jewish community about which little has been written in English. The author contributes a breadth of view to the subject by putting in its proper setting the fate of the Italian Jews under the various Popes and finally under Mussolini. He has drawn on many sources to good effect and has richly extended our knowledge of these sources. The critical tone of his researches gives a fuller picture of the complex relationship between the Italian Jews and the Popes.

The author's thesis is that many Popes believed that the Jews were the murderers of Christ, that the Vatican was aware of the extermination of European Jewry, that the Vatican's protests were feeble, that no Jews were given refuge in the Vatican. It is a telling indictment marshaled with an impressive array of facts. Yet the irony is that of all the European countries, Italy has been the freest not only of the most brutal forms of Jewish persecution, but even of a Jewish problem. The fate that overtook the Italian Jews was remarkable because of their long presence in Italy, their complete identification with the national life, their fewness in number and their loyal and distinguished service to the country.

One doubts whether Mussolini was anti-Semitic (one of his early mistresses,

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and certainly the most intelligent one, Margherita Sarfatti, was Jewish), and, as the author tells us, he once told Emil Ludwig that Italians regard racial discrimination with contempt. One of the author's best chapters, "Jewish Fascists," shows the extent to which many Italian Jews supported Mussolini.

Mr. Waagenaar, like many others, believes that Mussolini's conversion to anti-Semitism was due to his alliance with Hitler. However, Mussolini also turned racist because he tried to reinvigorate the mystique of an aging fascism, to give a new cause and dynamic to a youth disillusioned with his revolution.

One of the drawbacks in this admirable book is the author's failure to emphasize the many deeds of individual Christian heroism in rescuing the Italian Jews. Had it not been for the willingness of many Italians to take great risks, many more Italian Jews would have perished.

Yet one must agree with the author's objection to the slowness with which Pius XII denounced the racial policies of the Nazis. Beset on all sides by the countervailing pressures of self-seeking governments, Pius XII immured himself behind walls of silence. Disillusioned of his aspiration to become the peacemaker of the world, he was obliged to witness countless acts of atrocity which the war entailed. In his book, *The Vatican in the Age of the Dictators, 1922-1945,* Anthony Rhodes dismisses the charges of callousness or pro-Nazi sympathies, and reserves his criticism for the involuted baroqueness of the Pontiff's speeches, or his failure to develop a Secretariat of State beyond the antediluvian model capable of handling the quantity and quality of information at the Pope's disposal. But the real core of criticism, however, is whether the Pope was lacking in judgment in relying so much on the diplomatic rather than the prophetic dimensions of his position. Mr. Rhodes' generous and careful assessments of the former only underscore Mr. Waagenaar's severe criticism of papal hestitations about the latter. In an age of acute nationalism and dangerous dictatorship, the leadership of the Church surely called for more than a prudent and vacillating Pontiff.

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REVIEWERS

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CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 443)

highly heritable; (3) Black/White IQ differences are also highly heritable; (4) IQ causes success. Premises (1), (2) and (4) have long been widely believed by behavioral geneticists, educational theorists, and psychologists, compensatory education programs of the 1960's notwithstanding. Nevertheless, they are demonstrably false or unsupported, which only shows how deeply racist and elitist ideology has infected the roots of several sciences. There is no reason to believe the IQ test is anything more than a class- and race-biased achievement test. The twin study and adoptive children study data used for estimating heritability are worthless, as Princeton Professor Leon Kamin has shown. And Economists Samuel Bowles, Herbert Gintis and others have demolished the claim that IQ causes success (they point to class background as the main determinant). Only with regard to premise (3) do Jensen, Shockley and Eysenck stand out on their very own limb. Of course, (3) is also false, as Professor Richard Lewontin has clearly argued. So these revolutionaries, for all the heralding press, are in error every step of the way. In view of the massive publicity campaign the hereditarians have received, however, and in view of their relentless activity as proponents of their views, it becomes impossible to achieve public exposure of their racist and elitist views without clearly answering the persons as well as the ideas. They have been awarded much undeserved sympathy through their claims to be noble champions of the truth. If it were Jews or Anglo-Saxons, and not Blacks, who were being "proved" inferior, would there be such favorable press and sympathetic response for their "rights" to promote their views?

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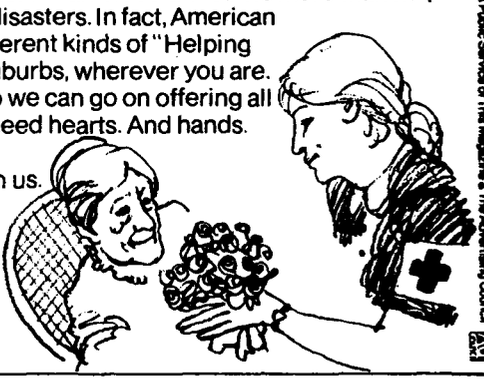

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